

**LIU XING'S AMBITION TO BE A SCIENTIST IN CHEN SHI-ZHENG'S  
*DARK MATTER* (2008) MOVIE: A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH**



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of study

Ambition is strong desire for advancement. Ambition applies to the desire for personal advancement or preferment and may suggest equally a praiseworthy or an inordinate desire. Aspiration implies a striving after something higher than oneself and usually implies that the striver is thereby ennobled. Ambition is reflected in *Dark Matter* movie with Liu Xing's ambition to be scientist. He has pride and hope, idealistic and ambitious, then humiliated and enraged, protagonist, but he can not defeat his emotion.

The movie of *Dark Matter* is directed by *Chen Shi-Zheng*. It was produced by American sterling production for Saltmill LLC, and premiered in 2007 Sundance Film Festival. The title of dark matter movie is inspired by the true story of [Gang Lu](#), a Chinese physics student that discovered dark matter in universes but a theory that conflicts with the lecture's model was eventually released in other countries on April 11, 2008, and DVD released on April 14, 2009 it was directed by [Chen Shi-Zheng](#). And the music is done by *Richard Boisson*, *Concerto Italiano*, and *Beijing Angelic Choir*. This movie is starring [Liu Ye](#) as Liu Xing, [Aidan Quinn](#) as Jacob raiser and [Meryl Streep](#) as Joanna silver. *Dark matter* has running time 86 minutes or 1 hour 26 minutes nearby 2 hours. This movie takes setting in America and china on 1990's and made with the genre of drama. The budget of this film is \$61,620 (estimated),

*Dark matter* is produced by Chen Shi-Zheng. He was born in 1963 in [\*Changsha, Hunan, China\*](#)) he is a New York-based [theater](#) director. Having earned a BA from the Hunan Art School in Traditional Opera, he received his MA from the Tisch School of Art at New York University.

Chen's [directorial](#) debut movie, [\*Dark Matter\*](#), was released in 2007, starring [Liu Ye](#) and [Meryl Streep](#). This movie won the [Alfred P. Sloan Prize](#) at the 2007 [Sundance Film Festival](#). He also directed [Damon Albarn](#) and [Jamie Hewlett](#)'s operatic stage adaptation of [\*Monkey: Journey to the West\*](#) at the [Manchester International Festival](#) in June–July 2007. In 2008 he directed the premiere production of [Stewart Wallace](#)'s opera [\*The Bonesetter's Daughter\*](#) at the [San Francisco Opera](#).

*Dark Matter* tells a Chinese science student pursuing a Ph.D. in the United States in the early 1990s. Driven by ambition, yet unable to navigate academic politics, Liu Xing is inexorably pushed to the margins of American life, until he loses his way.

Liu Xing arrives at a big Western university with plans to study the origins of the universe. At first, his experience is a heady rush of expectation and optimism. He finds other Chinese students to share a cheap apartment with him, and flirts with an attractive American girl who works in a local tea shop. When the head of the department, Jacob Reiser, welcomes Liu Xing into his select cosmology group, it seems that only hard work stands between him and a bright future in American science. At an orientation for foreigners

sponsored by a local church, Joanna Silver a wealthy patron of the university, notices the earnest student. An unspoken bond forms between them.

Liu Xing becomes Reiser's responsibility, accompanying him to a prestigious conference where he makes an impressive debut. He is drawn to the study of dark matter, an unseen substance that shapes the universe, but it soon becomes clear that his developing theories threaten Reiser's conflicting theories and well-established studies. Excited by the possibility of a breakthrough, Liu Xing is deaf to warnings that he must first pay his dues. When he is eclipsed within the department by Laurence, a more dutiful Chinese student, Liu Xing is forced to go behind Reiser's back to publish his discoveries. When the article draws ire instead of accolades, he turns to Joanna, who naively encourages him on his collision course.

Liu Xing clings to the idea of American science as a free market of ideas, and American society as wide open to immigrants. But in the end, his dissertation is rejected, and the girl in the tea shop brushes him off. His roommates find jobs, leaving him behind. Too proud to accept help from Joanna, and unwilling to return home to his parents, Liu Xing becomes a ghost-like presence at the university. Left alone with his shattered dreams, he explodes in a final act of violence.

The film has many reviews. As of April 11, 2008, the review aggregator [Rotten Tomatoes](#) reported that 32% of critics gave the movie positive reviews, based on 19 reviews. [Metacritic](#) reported the film had an average score of 49 out of 100, based on 7 reviews.

During this movie released, this film got one nomination and award in Sundance Film Festival. The nominations is Alfred P. Sloan Feature Film Prize (2007) with recipients *Chen Shi-Zheng* (director) *Billy Shebar* (writer)

*Dark Matter* is the success movie and interesting for many people and this movie is directed by Chen Shi-Zheng. The movie is made on the true story of an ambition of Chinese student who went ballistic at a major American university in the early '90s. The true story is reflected in *Dark Matter* with Liu Xing's ambition to be scientist. It stars Liu Ye as the initially idealistic and ambitious, then humiliated and enraged, protagonist; Aidan Quinn as Liu's arrogant faculty adviser; and Meryl Streep as a kind, if naive, patron of the university who be friends Chinese students.

*Dark Matter* movie have a meaning in human personality. It is reflected in Sigmund Freud's theory in psychoanalytic. The theory of psychoanalytic is composed of three elements. First, id is the only component of personality that is present from birth. This aspect of personality is entirely unconscious and includes of the instinctive and primitive behaviors. Second is ego is the component of personality that is responsible for dealing with reality. The last component of personality to develop is superego. Superego is the aspect of personality that holds all of our internalized moral standards and ideals that we acquire from both parents and society--our sense of right and wrong. The superego provides guidelines for making judgments. According to Freud, the superego begins to emerge at around age five.

There are two reasons why *Dark Matter* movie directed by *Chen Shi-Zheng* is an interesting movie. The first reason is *Dark Matter* is interesting movie. The conflicts that appear in this movie are faced by the characters.

The second reason is challenging. *Dark Matter* is challenging because director shows the aspects of character from this movie makes the audiences fell discontented, and disclosure.

Based on the background above, the writer proposes to conduct a research in title “ **LIU XING’S AMBITION TO BE A SCIENTIST IN CHEN SHI-ZHENG’S *DARK MATTER* (2008), MOVIE: A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH**”

## **B. Literature review**

The first about existentialism in a film dark matter: *Clashes, Cultural, Lingual, Scientific, Emotional*. Movie analysis paper by Grady harp (2009). In this analysis the research tries to analyze the *Dark Matter* is a movie have the meaning of comparison between two differences cultures. When, Liu Xing wants to show the capability, the lecture opposite to his theory. Here, the research to show that the different make the opposition between different cultures.

The second literature review of this research is *A Beautiful and Touching Film*, movie analysis by James Street (2008), the analysis of movie with sociological approach. In his analysis the researcher tries to analyze Liu Xing a young student with humble background, became the elite a few selected to pursue his dreams in America. He has high hopes of folks back

home and towards two goals in life: a Nobel Prize and a blond wife. When he has bright future is blocked by the jealous professor. Here, the research shows the effect of social jealous in academic. It is causing the differences opinions

The difference between Grady harp's research and the current research is in problem statement. Grady harp's research concerning on the *Dark Matter* movie using existentialism approaches while the current research concerning on Liu Xing's ambition to scientist.

The difference between the current research and James's analysis paper is in the problem statement. If James's analysis paper concerns on the *Dark Matter* movie using sociological approaches while the current research concern on Liu Xing's ambition to scientist.

### **C. Problem Statements**

Based on the background of choosing the subject above, the problem is "How is the ambition of Liu Xing to be a scientist being reflected in *Dark Matter*?"

### **D. Objective the Study**

The objective of the research is to expose the ambition of human's life in this film on the psychoanalytic approach by Chen Shi- Zheng.

### **E. Benefit of the Study**

#### **1. Academic benefit**

- a. This research can contribute to the science.
- b. This research can enrich the psychoanalysis data source to support another research which related to this object.

## **2. Practical**

To enlarge the writer knowledge about a psychoanalytic perspective in literature study.

## **F. Research Method**

### **1 The Type of the Research**

The type of research which is used by the writer is qualitative type.

### **2 The Object of the study**

The object of the research is the movie of *Dark Matter*; it is directed by *Chen Shi-Zheng*. It was produced by American sterling production for Saltmill LLC, and premiered in 2007 Sundance Film Festival.

### **3 The Type of Data Source**

#### **a. Primary source**

Primary source data is *Dark Matter* it is directed by *Chen Shi-Zheng*. It was produced by American sterling production for Saltmill LLC, and premiered in 2007 Sundance Film Festival. This data take from CD and DVD film

#### **b. Secondary data source**

Secondary data sources are taken from other materials related to the data required.



#### **4 The Technique of Data Collection**

The data method used for collecting data is library research by collecting both primary and secondary data. The researcher also involve some required steps to collect data, they are:

- a. Watching the movie
- b. Reviewing the movie
- c. Reading about the related data
- d. Making notes of important data

#### **5 The Technique of Analyzing Data**

In analyzing data, the writer employs descriptive qualitative analysis of the object of study. The analysis is begun from structural analysis of the work and finally uses sociology analysis of the literature work.

#### **G. Organization of Research Paper**

Chapter 1 is introduction which consists of background of the study, previous study, problem statement, and the objective of study, benefit of the study and organization of research paper. Then, chapter 2 is underlying theory; it consists of Notion of psychoanalysis of literature, Principle of psychoanalysis of literature, Theoretical application of psychoanalysis literature. Chapter 3 is the research method , it consist of type of research , the object of the research, the data source, the method collecting data and the method analyzed data. And the last, Chapter 4 is the analysis data, and chapter 5 is conclusion and the suggestion.